

-- 4. (Amended) A method of enhancing yeast fermentation of wort, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) suspending yeast in a wort-free aqueous solution comprising a fermentable sugar in an amount sufficient to give a gravity in the range of from about 2 to about 25 degrees Plato;

A1 (b) aerating the suspension for a period of time with a gas comprising oxygen to allow oxygen uptake by the yeast required for sterol and unsaturated fatty acid synthesis;

(c) transferring the yeast of step (b) to a suitable volume of wort having a gravity comparable to the gravity of the solution of step (a); and

(d) allowing fermentation to occur under suitable fermentation conditions. --

-- 5. (Amended) The method of claim 4, wherein zinc is added to the yeast suspension. --

A2 -- 7. (Amended) The method of claim 4, wherein the wort is nonaerated wort. --

Please add new claims 11-20.

A3 -- 11. (New) The method of claim 4, wherein the wort is aerated wort. --

-- 12. (New) The method of claim 4, wherein the fermentable sugar is a solution comprising dextrose, maltose, and maltotriose. --

-- 13. (New) The method of claim 4, wherein the fermentable sugar comprises a sugar selected from fructose, sucrose, raffinose, trehalose, melibiose, galactose, and lactose. --

-- 14. (New) The method of claim 4, wherein the fermentable sugar is substantially free of organic compounds known to be involved in beer staling. --

A3 -- 15. (New) The method of claim 4, wherein the wort-free aqueous solution has a sugar concentration in the range of from about 2% w/w to about 25% w/w. --

-- 16. (New) The method of claim 4, wherein the gas is delivered above the maximum oxygen uptake rate of the yeast. --

-- 17. (New) A method for fermenting wort, the method comprising:

(a) suspending yeast in a wort-free aqueous solution comprising a fermentable sugar in an amount sufficient to give a gravity in the range of from about 2 to about 25 degrees Plato;

(b) aerating the suspension for a period of time with a gas comprising oxygen to allow oxygen uptake by the yeast [required for sterol and unsaturated fatty acid synthesis;

(c) transferring the yeast of step (b) to a suitable volume of non-aerated wort having a gravity comparable to the gravity of the solution of step (a);

(d) allowing fermentation of the wort to occur; and

(e) monitoring the wort for an end of fermentation,

wherein the end of fermentation is reached in a shorter time than a conventional fermentation method wherein aerated wort is pitched with a non-aerated yeast slurry. - -

A3 -- 18. (New) The method of claim 17, wherein the fermentable sugar of step (a) is liquid adjunct. - -

-- 19. (New) The method of claim 18, wherein the yeast is brewer's yeast. - -

-- 20. (New) The method of claim 19, wherein zinc is added to the yeast suspension. - -

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph. Claims 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,329,433 to Seebeck *et al.* ("Seebeck"). Claims 2 and 5 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over Seebeck and Applicants' specification. In view of the above amendments, and the remarks below, reconsideration is respectfully requested.